Applying Pesticides Correctly

Pesticides are products designed to kill pests. When applied improperly, they harm the environment and us.

Here are a few tips for homeowners to protect the environment.

- *Identify the pest (insect, disease, weed, or animal problem) before applying pesticides.* For assistance contact your County OSU Extension office.

- *If insects are small, such as spider mites and aphids, rinse plants.* This will knock many of the insects off the plants.

- *When purchasing pesticides, ask questions.* Garden center clerks can answer many of your questions. If they cannot, ask for the manager or ask them to contact the Extension office.

- *Try some of the alternatives or less toxic pesticides.* Examples include insecticidal soaps, horticulture oils, and pyrethrins.

- *Read pesticide labels before mixing.* Never mix pesticides according to memory or a friend's recommendation.

- *Wear protective clothing when mixing pesticides.* Cover all exposed areas of skin. Dry formulations may require a dust mask and gloves. Liquid formulations may require liquid-proof gloves. All pesticides should be kept out of eyes. Use goggles to ensure eye protection.

- *Mix pesticides outdoors for proper ventilation.*

- *Design measuring devises for use only when measuring pesticides.*

- *Rinse measuring devises outdoors.* Do not rinse in sink or storm drains where pesticides could flow into wastewater treatment plants, creeks, rivers, or lakes.

- *Wear protective clothing when applying pesticides.* Cover all exposed skin. Wear liquid proof gloves, long sleeved shirts, long pants, liquid-proof boots, and goggles when needed. Wear a dust mask in addition to clothing mentioned when applying dusts or granules. Remove clothes following application. Wash clothing separately, using the full load cycle and hot (140°) water. Dry clothes on a line.

- *Apply pesticides when wind is minimal.* The best time is early morning or evening.

- *Do not apply pesticides during the heat of the day during hot weather.* Heat exhaustion can occur due to protective clothing worn. Also, some pesticides may burn plants during excessive heat or humidity.

- *Remember that bees, other pollinators, and beneficial insects are killed by certain pesticides.*

- *Give pesticides time to dry before allowing people or pets into the treated area.* Follow all re-entry information.

- *Rinse equipment outdoors.* Sprayers and spreaders must be rinsed following application. Spray rinse solution back onto treated area. Do not pour rinse water, solution, or concentrates down household sinks, toilets, or storm drains.

- *Store pesticides out of reach of children.* Many accidents occur due to easy access of pesticides to children.

- *Store pesticides in their original containers in a cool, dry, ventilated, and locked area.*

- *Rinse and dispose of empty containers correctly.* Empty liquid containers should be triple rinsed, punctured (do not puncture glass or aerosol containers), wrap in several sheets of paper, and dispose of in trash receptacles. Empty pesticide bags should be folded and wrapped in plastic bags and disposed of in trash receptacles.

- *Dispose of pesticides correctly.* Three possible disposal methods include:

    1. Using pesticides completely.

    2. Giving unused pesticides to a friend or relative.

    3. Taking unwanted pesticides to a household hazardous waste collection event.

Pesticide Safety Begins With You!

Why read a label? Almost everything you need to know is on the label. A label lists the following:

- Active ingredient(s). These are the compounds in formulated pesticides that prevent, destroy, repel, or decrease populations of pests.

- Proper clothing or safety gear to be worn during mixing and application.

- Target pests.

- Plants or areas to be treated.

- Amount of pesticide to mix.

- How often treatments are needed.

- Storage information.

- Disposal information.

- Emergency information.

Read and follow the label of any pesticide, including natural, less toxic, and synthetic pesticides.

Never pour pesticides down any drain, sink, toilet, or storm drain.